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HARRIS' HAWK KILLS EGRET

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The Harris' Hawk (*Parabuteo unicinctus*), though it captures many small animals and is even said to take carrion, at times tackles larger prey without hesitation, both in the wild and when trained for hunting, as the following experience illustrates. On the morning of January 25, 1975, I was photographing in a swampy area along a road in San Luis Potosi, Mexico. A Harris' Hawk flew in, swooped on a lone nearby Snowy Egret (*Egretta thula*), and carried the squawking heron about one hundred yards to a low stub. When I approached, the hawk carried its prey about fifty yards further, landing in a palm tree and dropping the egret, still alive, at its base. Six other snowies flew around the victim excitedly, and then a Common Egret (*Casmerodius albus*) flew in and lit nearby for a couple of minutes. After ten minutes the hawk dropped down, seized the egret which was still able to squawk once or twice more, and laboriously carried it off behind a screen of trees, where the hawk apparently fed. A quarter of an hour later the hawk, unencumbered, returned to its perch in the palm. Probably the egret weighed about half as much as the hawk.